

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 DLOS-09 OES-07 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 CG-00 DOTE-00 EB-08

AGR-05 COME-00 TRSE-00 /105 W

-----077306 292353Z /70

R 280700Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0999

INFO AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L VICTORIA 0587

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, EFIS, PEPR, UR, SE

SUBJECT: SOVIET FISHERIES NEGOTIATIONS WITH SEYCHELLES

1. FOUR-MAN SOVIET DELEGATION LED BY V.I. ZAKURDAEV, PRESIDENT OF THE ALL-UNION FISHERIES CORPORATION, MET WITH GOS FISHERIES EXPERTS AND MFA OFFICIALS JUNE 8-23 TO DISCUSS COOPERATION IN EXPLOITATION OF SEYCHELLES VAST FISHERIES POTENTIAL. ACCORDING GOS SOURCES INVOLVED IN NEGOTIATIONS, SOVIET DELEGATION ARRIVED WITH AN AGREEMENT IN FINAL FORM WHICH WOULD HAVE ACCORDED SOVIET FISHING FLEET EXCLUSIVE PORT RIGHTS AT VICTORIA AND ON-SHORE COLD STORAGE FACILITIES. ALSO, SOVIETS REQUESTED PERMISSION FOR UNDISCLOSED BUT SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF SOVIET ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL STAFF TO BE RESIDENT IN SEYCHELLES WITH DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITIES AND PRIVILEGES. (LOCAL CONTRACTOR INFORMED US INQUIRIES WERE MADE FOR 24 RESIDENCES.) SEYCHELLOIS RESPONSE TO THIS POINT WAS TO RESTATE GOS POLICY THAT STAFF OF EACH RESIDENT MISSION BE LIMITED TO TEN PERSONNEL. IMPRESSION  
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SEYCHELLES DELEGATION RECEIVED WAS THAT SOVIET INTENTION WAS TO TURN SEYCHELLES INTO HEADQUARTERS FOR THEIR FISHING ACTIVITIES IN ENTIRE CENTRAL INDIAN OCEAN REGION. SOVIET DELEGATION ORIGINALLY INTENDED TO COMPLETE THEIR WORK IN FOUR DAYS BUT STAYED ON FOR NEARLY TWO MORE WEEKS OF WHAT GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER CHARACTERIZED AS "HARD NEGOTIATIONS."

2. ACCORDING SOURCES, GOS INITIALLY AGREED TO RECEIVE DELEGATION BECAUSE IT THOUGHT SOVIETS WANTED TO DISCUSS PAYMENT FOR LICENSING FEES FOR SOVIET TRAWLERS PRESENTLY POACHING IN SEYCHELLES MARITIME ZONE, AND WAS "STUNNED" BY SOVIET PROPOSALS. PRESIDENT RENE, DISPLAYING CONSIDERABLE IRRITATION, AT JUNE 9 RECEPTION TOLD CHARGE HE HAD "FLATLY REJECTED" ALL SOVIET OVERTURES AND REITERATED GOS POLICY OF NOT ENTERING INTO ANY JOINT VENTURES OR BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS WHICH WOULD UNDERMINE HIS INTENTION TO CREATE GOS-OWNED AND OPERATED COMMERCIAL FISHING INDUSTRY (WITH BRITISH AND FRENCH AID). HE ALSO CONFIRMED THAT GOS INTENDED TO CHARGE FEES FOR VESSELS FROM OTHER STATES AUTHORIZED TO FISH IN SEYCHELLES WATERS. AT JUNE 23 MEETING, RENE AGAIN EXPRESSED TO CHARGE HIS GENERAL DISPLEASURE WITH SOVIETS AND SAID NON-RESIDENT SOUTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR HAD ESTIMATED GOS COULD EARN AS MUCH AS DOLS 3-4 MILLION PER YEAR FROM FEE SCHEME.

3. ON JUNE 23, PRESIDENT RENE AND ZAKURDAEV SIGNED COOPERATION AGREEMENT IN BRIEF STATE HOUSE CEREMONY. SOVIET AMBASSADOR STARTSEV, AT JUNE 27 RECEPTION ABOARD VISITING FRENCH WARSHIP, TOLD CHARGE THAT FINAL AGREEMENT WAS "GENERAL AND UNSPECIFIC" AND INDICATED DISPLEASURE THAT THREE PROPOSED PROTOCOLS (COVERING SOVIET FISHING IN SEYCHELLES WATERS, EXPLORATION OF FISHERIES POTENTIAL AND POSSIBLE TRAINING OF SEYCHELLOIS FISHERMEN BY SOVIETS) WOULD HAVE TO BE NEGOTIATED AT LATER

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DATE.

4. COMMENT: SOVIET-SEYCHELLOIS FISHERIES TALKS APPEAR TO REPRESENT YET ANOTHER SETBACK FOR SOVIETS IN THEIR EFFORT TO MAKE INROADS WITH RENE'S SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, SEYCHELLOIS HAVE CONSISTENTLY TURNED ASIDE SOVIET OFFERS OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND SCHOLARSHIPS. THE RECENT SIGNING OF AN AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH PRC WILL CONSTRUCT MAJOR SECONDARY SCHOOL (VICTORIA 331) MAY, HOWEVER, NECESSITATE A SOMEWHAT MORE FORTHCOMING APPROACH FROM RENE IN THE FUTURE IN ORDER TO STRIKE BALANCE AND MAINTAIN NON-ALIGNED POSTURE. AT PRESENT, HOWEVER, RENE DISPLAYS SERIOUS MISGIVINGS (WHICH ARE PROBABLY NOT SHARED BY SOME OF HIS MORE DOCTRINAIRE MINISTERS) ABOUT SOVIET INTENTIONS IN SEYCHELLES AND SHOWS EVERY SIGN OF ATTEMPTING TO KEEP THEM AT ARM'S LENGTH.

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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